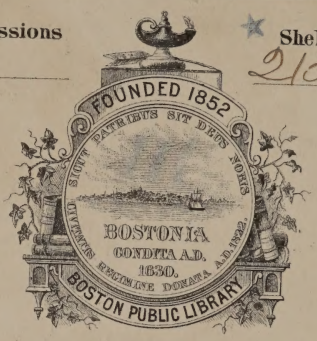
BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 09856 187 9

Accessions

Shelf No.
2130.64



Received Dec. 15, 1892.

HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS AND REPRINTS. NUMBER 1.

MEMORANDA

OF

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL ELD, OF THE COLD-STREAM GUARDS, DURING HIS SERVICE IN AMERICA,

IN THE

2150.64

YEARS 1779 AND 1780.

ORIGINAL LETTERS

OF

HUGH, EARL PERCY AND AFTERWARDS DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND,

BETWEEN

APRIL 17, 1774, AND JULY 11, 1778.

PRINTED FROM MANUSCRIPTS IN THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE TRUSTEES.
1892.

B. 86.
Dec. 15, 1892.

Reprinted from the Bulletin of the Boston Public Library, Jan., 1892.

100 COPIES.

PRESS OF
Rockwell and Churchill,
BOSTON.

MEMORANDA

OF

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL ELD, OF THE COLDSTREAM GUARDS, DURING HIS SERVICE IN AMERICA,

IN THE

YEARS 1779 AND 1780.

THESE notes of a British officer's life in and about New York during two years of the Revolution, have already been printed, in part, in the Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, for May, 1880, vol. 18, pp. 72–79. They are there prefaced by some account of Colonel Eld, by Mr. George B. Chase. Written upon leaves which have been inserted between the pages of a copy of Tarleton's "History of the Campaigns of 1780–81, in the Southern Provinces of North America," they were probably begun as a running commentary on that work, which has been divided into two volumes, and interleaved for that purpose. This intention was not carried out, however, and the entries given relate only to interesting personal experiences, which terminate abruptly on March 26, 1780.

IT should be observed, that, L^{t}. Col^{l}. Tarleton, on the appointment of the R^{t}. Hon'ble the Earl of Cornwallis to the command in the East Indies, had applied to that Nobleman for permission to accompany him — Lord Cornwallis his refusal to such request, if it did not positively produce the history of the Campaigns of 80 & 81, influenced the work to establish conclusions & censures, but too frequently unjust, because decided from Events, without fairly bringing forward the local circumstances & partial situations that were productive of such events & perhaps swerved the wisdom of the moment — To exemplify this, Col^{l}. Tarleton, with more ingenuity than is absolutely necessary to the character of a brave & liberal soldier, negatively implies that the conduct of the Earl Cornwallis was exceedingly injudicious, when speaking of the battle of Guilford, he says, "the reasons which now induced Gen^{l}. Greene not to decline a general engagement,

equally indicated his wisdom & professional knowledge. A defeat of the British would have been attended with the *total destruction* of Earl Cornwallis's Infantry, whilst a victory at this juncture could produce no very decisive consequences against the Americans." Under impressions of this description, no Reader can deny that the conduct of Earl Cornwallis appears highly reprehensible — to hazard the total destruction of his army, when no material advantage could be gained; it is true, that these observations made by Col[l]. Tarleton are introduced as a compliment to the discernment of Gen[l]. Greene, yet the concealed censure, intended for the Earl, is but too artificially covered, not to be obvious to the eye of the most inattentive reader.

Earl Cornwallis was so far advanced in the Country that he had no alternative; he had either to pursue or be pursued. To retreat before a superior army is equally as hazardous & perhaps more destructive than a general engagement, nor was it possible to follow an army, one days march in advance only, where forage & provisions were to be obtained but by skirmishing; it should be ever remembered that delay would have added fresh vigor to Gen[l]. Greene's army, that each day would have poured in recruits to the American Arms, whilst the British forces must have experienced a fatal decrease & thus circumstanced Earl Cornwallis would have had not the most distant hopes of success, but would have experienced all the calamities of destruction & conquest, that were avoided by his timely and well judged conflict at Guilford.

This allowed, the conduct of Gen[l]. Greene will not appear to merit the high encomium that L[t]. Col[l]. Tarleton has so unnecessarily given to him, for in the short space of fourteen days the above suppositions would have been realized. I have dwelt thus long upon this, to show how easy it is fairly to misrepresent under the semblance of truth and candour.

During the time that Gen[l]. S[r]. Henry Clinton was besieging Charlestown, Gen[l]. Knypausen had the command of the British forces at New York.

The Guards & other detachments amounting to 2500—, joined Lord Cornwallis January the 20[th]. 1781 in South Carolina, to which period I shall endeavour to recollect such events as more immediately concerned myself, without endeavouring to give a general history of the Campaigns to the Northward, as I write only for the sake of reference & personal recollection.

May 1st. 1779 Set sail for America, in the Grand Duke, (formerly an East India ship), arrived off Sandy Hook Aug. 23d. & landed in the City of New York 25th.

No unusual events attended this voyage, a storm which took away the foremast, the ship run foul of the Romulus, (74 Guns) that took away the quarter gallery, three gales of wind & a water spout.

On my arrival at New York, I was appointed to the Light Infantry Company of the Guards, altho' an Ensign & in Janr. 1780 for two months had the Command of that Company. —

Quartered in the City of New York

Octr. 23d. — A skirmish in the Jersey's, destroyed some boats, lost six or seven of the Lt. Company &ca —

26th. Marched from New York to the Lines Kings Bridge — encamped. —

Octr. 27th. The weather very cold & rainy. — On duty at an advanced Redoubt — the Rebel Light Horse appeared — I was ordered out with 50 Light Infantry — after a few shots fired & received, the Light horse retreated —

Novr. 14th. Deep & heavy snows — The Light Infantry company Guards, commanded by Col[l]. Watson with intentions to intercept a party of rebel Light horse & Infantry, marched from the Lines at nine o'clock at night — being fired at near Delancey's Mills I was detached & soon learned that the shots came from friendly Refugees who joined the detachment. Remained on the ground two hours & then proceeded, being reinforced with 50 of Demurs Light horse, — to East Chester — remained three hours in ambuscade on our arms till the day dawned, when being discovered by the advanced guard of the enemy, fired into the midst of them, several were wounded, but being mounted made their escape, 9 were killed & two made prisoners — two or three wounded on our side — pursued the main body unsuccessfully — returned to Kings Bridge, after having marched 29 miles through deep snows &ca —

Nov. 20th. Distant shots at the Rebel Light horse. —

Decr. 2d. A most violent storm of wind & rain with snow. most of the tents blown down. — Exchanged a few shots on an out patrole. —

Decr. 20th. Hard frost — the Soldiers hutted. — My hut not finished. —

A Party of Rebels attacked & plundered the Inhabitants of Morissania & the West Farms; the Light Infantry of the Guards with Demur's horse were detached to pursue & overtook them, taking 8 Prisoners, killing five— 25 horses, — & recovered the plunder &ca — we had 3 wounded. — On our return met a patrole of Col^{l}. White's Light horse — fired at the party — They fled precipitately —

Dec^{r}. 26th. The frost intense — attempted unsuccessfully to take a rebel whale boat, which was entangled in the ice of the North river.

Dec^{r}. 27th. Hutted. The weather pleasant & healthy, the mornings clear & cold, the serenity of the sky beautiful, the mid-day pleasant, but the evening dreadfully cold.

Jan^{y}. 1st. 1780 — Appointed to the Command of the Light Infantry Company. —

6th. Snow Storms. —

16th. Two o'clock in the morning, the house of Col^{l}. Hetfield, beyond the lines at Morrissania was fired by a detachment of rebels, who after having made the Col^{l}. Prisoner & maliciously committed some pitiful depredations, retreated — The two Light Infantry Companies of the Guards with the mounted refugees were ordered out under the Command of Col^{l}. Hall — after a march of 25 miles fell in with their rear guard — a trifling but general contest ensued — nine rebels were killed, sixteen taken prisoners, many wounded. — The rebels now appeared to the amount of 800, when on our taking an advantageous situation they retired — we returned 12 miles & remained the night in some log houses & returned to the lines on being joined by a detachment sent out to cover our retreat.

Jan^{y}. 18. The rivers frozen. —

21st. Rode to New York. At twelve at night entering the Coffee house I was accosted by L^{t}. Callender of the 42^{d} Reg^{t}. (with whom I had no acquaintance) who insolently asked me if I would drink some punch — I declined the offer, on this he observed, "ubi periculum ibi est gloria" & asked me if I wanted a translation — I told him, no, but requested an explanation — on this he drew a small sword — I also drew mine which was a very short couteau — he perceived the superiority he possessed from the difference of the weapons, which seemed to stimulate his cowardice to the attack which he began by two lunges, which having

parried, with all the fury & vigor I possessed I returned by cutting at him, without paying any attention to a guard — he retreated the length of the Coffee house — I had now beat the point of his sword down & intended to have killed him, but was prevented by Cap^{n}. Peerie, who seized hold of my wrist & arrested the stroke — I told him his interference was unmanly & ungentlemanlike as the contest was not finished — by this time some officers had taken Cap^{n}. Callenders sword from him — I declared if any person presumed to touch my sword I would run him thro' the body. — Cap^{ns}. Peerie & Callender next morning asked my pardon. — I afterwards was informed that Cap^{n}. C. — being an uncommon good swordsman often insulted strangers in a similar manner. — The disgrace he experienced from this contest, in some measure cured him.

Jan^{y}. 22^{d}. Returned to Kings Bridge — On an out picquet under the Command of Col^{l}. Norton. —

23^{d}. On the alert — The rivers being passably frozen, an attack on the lines from Washington was apprehended

25. Severe weather.

27 On duty at the advanced redoubt Prince Charles. — the night cold & dark — ordered to return, the work being deemed too unsafe. —

28th. The Officers (Ens^{n} Goodricke & myself) of the 2^{d}. L^{t}. Infantry never undress. — nor the soldiers — the rivers being frozen. —

Jan^{y}. 30th. The North river opposite Kings bridge froze over — a circumstance not remembered by the oldest inhabitant of this island. — Since Sir Henry Clinton's detachment sailed from New York, the effective forces that remain to guard the island are in number less than 13,000 —

Feb^{y}. 3^{d}. The Light Infantry & Grenad^{s}. of the Guards (480) under the Command of Col^{l}. Norton, were ordered on a party to surprize a rebel Post named Young's house. — The snow having fell with much continuance & severity, sleighs were provided to convey the soldiers to the Post — these conveyances were immediately quitted, for the cold was too intense to remain inactive, nor was it possible for the horses to get through the snow — the horses, sleighs, & a three pounder for these reasons were left within the lines at Kings bridge. At half past ten o'clock the detachment marched — the night was dark — to prevent discovery, the high road was avoided, & by eleven

the next day, after a march of 26 miles, through unfrequented paths & untracted snow, the rebel Post was completely surrounded. — The house was stone, strongly & advantageously situated — some slight defences were formed in front of the Post, which consisted of 260 selected Continentals who having intelligence of our approach, were judiciously disposed to annoy or prevent the attack — after a spirited & brisk conflict of firing, during which time our detachment formed more collectedly than at the first advance was possible to effect, from the depth of the snow. — the Light Infantry Horn sounded the charge — the rebels retreated within the house, which was soon stormed by the Grenadiers & now a short but destructive contest ensued. — The house was fired & many of the enemy who had retreated for security to the cellars were crushed in the burning ruins. Sixty of the enemy effected their escape, seventy were made prisoners & the remainder killed or so badly wounded as to be left on the ground. — 2 officers were killed — nine taken prisoners. — On our part the loss was trifling. — Sixteen killed, thirty slightly wounded. — Col^{l}. Norton slightly wounded & 2 officers. — The detachment now returned & entered the lines at ten o'clock the next night, *without once halting*.

Feb^{y}. 4th. Early in the morning ordered with 30 Light Infantry to march the prisoners to New York. — returned next day. —

March 23^{d}. — At six in the evening a detachm^{t} of 600 commanded by Lt. Col^{l}. Howard marched to Spithim Devil creek, from whence at about ten they embarked in flat bottom boats and landed at ½ past twelve at Kloster lock in the Jersies — having marched till seven in the morning I was sent forward with 60 Light Infantry to attack a rebel Picquet, on the right of the main body of the rebels who were advantageously posted & fortified in a Church Yard at a place called Paramus — the Picq^{t}. was placed at the edge of a wood with a plain of half an mile in the rear, — I surprized the Picq^{t}. which instantly fled & the most famous chase over the plain ensued — we were in at the death of seven. — I had given orders that my Party should not fire but use their Bayonets — notwithstanding the Main Body Being apprized of Col^{l}. Howards attack, fled into the woods — I fired at an Officer who was mounted, who to save himself cast away his saddle bags — which contained above 27.000 Dollars, paper Curr^{n}y,

orders, letters, &ca the dollars, (reserv^{g} a few thous^{d}. for myself) I sold for a farthing each & distributed to the men — after a tiresome pursuit, I rejoined Col^{l}. H. who immediately retreated — On our return which was by a different route, we were joined by a detachment of the 42^{d} Reg^{t}. & Hessians & 43^{d}. —

The Rebels now collected & began to harrass our rear — I had the Command of the rear Guard — Cap^{n}. Dundass flanked — the road in which we marched was wide & walled on each side — the road being a continuation of sudden hills — the main Body was little annoyed — & afforded me an opportunity of disputing each heighth — the rebels made three charges & each time were repulsed — their loss was as ten to one — Col^{l}. Howards retreat was so precipitate that he never once detached a party to my support; fortunately for me, the rebels now changed their attack to the left of our line of march — they now flanked from behind trees, &ca with the greatest security — the road on that side being open & a narrow & impassable swamp immediately adjoining it; thus we retreated, annoyed by a constant fire, with great loss — which produced a general confusion, Col^{l}. Howard neglecting to give any orders — till we arrived at a Bridge; so great was Howards confusion, that as the rear Guard was crossing the Bridge, he was threatening the trembling Owner of the adjacent house, with death & destruction if he did not take up the planks of the Bridge — as this was impossible, our army not chooseing to make the attempt & the Owner of the house from inclination not intending to do it, I volunteered the duty & promised Col^{l}. Howard to destroy the Bridge. I never professed myself a volunteer for any duty, but on this occasion I had two reasons for my Conduct.

The first reason arose from my having perceived that the Enemy were bringing Cannon & horse — the whole weight of which must have been sustained by the rear guard, the other was, vanity; the vanity of attempting that danger, which a whole army had avoided — I now called the Light Infantry, which composed the rear Guard to assist me, but so great was the panic, *that only* FOUR remained. — Cap^{n}. Dundass hearing my voice joined me as did Cap^{ns}. Anstruther & Dennis with one private of the 43^{d} & 2 privates of the 42^{d}. Reg^{t}. The Hessian detachment perceiving our intentions formed on a small rise

& covered our attempt — Under a very heavy fire, we effected our design, by dislodging the planks — which effectually prevented the horse & feild pieces from following our line of March. As this was done in the full view of the whole army, my vanity once more got ascendancy over my reason, inducing me to remain the last on the Bridge — In our retreating from the Bridge — three of the Light Infantry were killed, one of the 42 & 43 — Cap^{n}. A: was wounded — L^{t}. Dennis slightly — Dundass & myself escaped. —

For having thus destroyed the Bridge, which rendered the rest of the retreat safe & easy — Cap^{n}. Dundass & myself rec^{d}. in public orders the thanks of Gen^{l}. Mathew, the Commanding Officer at Kings bridge — as also Gen^{l}. Knyphausen's thanks Comm^{r}. in Chief at New York. We now (March 24th. 5 o'clock even'g) recrossed the North river, after a march of 40 miles thro' the enemys Country — We took 1 Cap^{n}. & 100 privates — our loss must have been nearly 300 —

March 25 Commanded 20 L^{t}. Inf^{y} & 20 Grenadiers in pursuit of some rebels — took two — the rest fled —

March 26th. Got permission to visit New York & to perform at the Theatre.

ORIGINAL LETTERS

OF

HUGH, EARL PERCY AND AFTERWARDS DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND,

BETWEEN

APRIL 17, 1774, AND JULY 11, 1778.

THESE letters of Earl Percy relating to America at the outbreak of the Revolution, and especially to affairs in and about Boston at that time, are reprinted from the originals in the Boston Public Library. Nine of the letters are in Percy's autograph and one is a copy. No. 11 is from Sir John Fielding announcing to the Duke of Northumberland that the portrait of his son had been placed in the Guild Hall by the magistrates of the City and Liberty of Westminster.

I. KINSALE, Ap^{l}. 17th. 1774.

DEAR D^{R}.

Thanks to you for your Letter which I received on my Arrival here. Tho' I wrote by the last Post to my Father, & have nothing to say yet I could not help setting down just to inform you that We are still here, nor have we as yet got any Intelligence of the Transports. However as the Wind is fair, We have reason to expect Them every Moment. Our Orders, with regard to our Encamping at Boston, you know in London full as well if not better than we do, as I find we are to have eight Reg^{ts}. there, I fancy severity is intended. Surely the People of Boston are not Mad enough to think of opposing us. Headiness & Temper will I hope set things in that Quarter to

rights, & Gen[l]. Gage is the proper Man to do it. Adieu my Dear D[r]. & be assured I am

Your sincere Friend

PERCY.

To

The Rev[d]. D. Percy,

Northumberland House

London.

Free

Percy

II. ON BOARD THE SYMETRY, May 8[th]. 1774.

DEAR D[R].

We are at last on board, & shall sail directly. I should think myself much obliged to you if you would send me over the English Votes constantly to Boston. My Newspapers the Porter will forward as usual. I am so cold — I can scarce hold my Pen, & if I could it & the Ink are so bad I can hardly make the Letter legible. Adieu my Dear D[r]. & believe me

Yours sincerely

PERCY.

P. S. Mess[rs]. Baker, Palmer, Gair &c who are on board with me beg I will present their Comp[ts]. —

III. CAMP AT BOSTON, Oct[r]. 27[th]. 1774.

How shall I thank my good D[r]. Percy for the Letters He has been so kind as to write to me, or what return can I make Him for the Entertainment they have given me? As I find it is impossible, I'll give it up handsomely at once, & think [no] more of it.

Our affairs here are in the most Critical Situation imaginable; Nothing less than the total loss or Conquest of the Colonies must be the End of it. Either indeed is disagreable, but one or the other is now absolutely necessary.

We have got together a clever little Army here 8 Reg[ts] of Infantry besides two which are daily expected, together with a pretty small train of Artillery. However many more will be wanted next Spring. You may judge a little of the temper of the People by an

Address which I have enclosed to my Mother. Our Weather here is charming; It was so warm yesterday & is again so warm to day that I am obliged to sit with all my Windows open. Nay even this morning when I went to visit the Out-Posts at daybreak it was quite mild & pleasant. But we must soon expect to change this Weather for Frost & Snow; for I am told the transition from Summer to Winter is very sudden in this Climate.

Do let me know in your next, how my Brother does, & what He is about. I have not received one Letter from Him for upwards of a twelvemonth, tho' I have frequently wrote to Him. Adieu My Dear Doctor make my Compts. agreable to your Family & believe me to be

Your sincere Friend
PERCY.

To
The Revd. Dr. Percy.

IV. BOSTON Novr. 25th. 1774

DEAR DR.

By some unfortunate Accident, I dont get my News-Papers for above a Month after everybody else, for example my latest Papers are of the 9th of Septr. & we have received Papers as late as the 15th. of Octr. This I fancy must be owing to their sending them to some Coffee House to proceed by Ships, who never sail for a Month so soon as they say they will. Whereas it will be a much more safe & speedy method to divide them into three or four Parcells, & send them out by the Pacquet which sails from Falmouth. If therefore they are directed to me here & sent the first Wednesday in every Month to the Genl. Post Office, they will come both quicker & safer. Our Winter is now come on here, but I cannot say as yet I find it colder than in England. We have had little or no Snow, but a great deal of Rain, & violent Gales of Wind. However we luckily got into Winter Quarters about a week ago, before it came on.

Our Affairs here still continue in the same Posture; The Provincial Congress I find met again yesterday, & I am informed they mean to proceed to the choice of a new Govr. They have already raised an Army, seized the Publick Money, & have taken on them-

selves all the Powers of Government. I really begin now to think that it will come to Blows at last; For They are most amazingly encouraged by our having done nothing as yet.

In short they have now got to such lengths that nothing can secure the Colonies to the Mother Country, but the Conquest of them. The People here are the most designing, Artfull Villains in the World. They have not the least Idea of either Religion or Morality. Nor have they the least Scruple of taking the most solemn Oath on any Matter that can assist their Purpose, tho' they know the direct contrary can be clearly & evidently proved in half an Hour.

Of this We have had several Instances. May I beg you will be so kind as to send me out Here the following Books. The new Edition of Manstein's Memoirs of Russia — History of the War in America by Mante — & Avis d'une Mère à un fils par la Marquise de Lambert — I need not make any excuses to you for giving you this trouble as I know you are always ready to assist your Friends. I still continue to enjoy my health perfectly. The constant exercise which my Duty obliges me to take in visiting all the Out-Posts every other morning about day break together with the morning Air, contributes not a little to keep me in Health. I forgot amongst the List of Books to desire you to send me Les Mémoires de Monsr. de Feuquières. You will be so good as to send them off as soon as you get any of them as I mean them chiefly for my Winter's Amusement. Adieu Dear Dr. make my Compts. agreable to all your Family & believe me to be

Your sincere Friend

PERCY.

P. S. I have sent you enclosed a Ridicule upon the Genl. Congress.

To

The Revd. Dr. Percy.

V. BOSTON Apl. 8th. 1775

DEAR DR.

Tho' I have wrote so lately both to my Father & Mother, yet I always take every opportunity of letting some of you at Northd. House hear from me. Things now every day begin to grow more & more serious; A Vessel is arrived by accident here that has brought us a

Newspaper in which we have the joint Address of the two Houses of Parliament to His Majesty; this has convinced the Rebels (for we may now legally call them so) that there is no hopes for them but by submitting to Parliament; they have therefore begun seriously to form their Army & have already appointed all the Staff. They are every day in greater Numbers evacuating this Town & have proposed in Congress, either to set it on Fire & attack the troops before a reinforcement comes, or to endeavour to starve us. Which they mean to adopt, time only can show. The Gen[l]. however has received no Acc[t]. whatever from Europe, so that [on] our side no steps of any kind can be taken as yet. The Weather here for the last three weeks has been cold & disagreable, a kind of second Winter, however as this day is remarkably warm & fine I flatter myself our good Weather is now beginning. Thank God, I still continue to enjoy my health perfectly & have very much surprised the Inhabitants here by going constantly all Winter with my bosom open without a Great Coat. They own however that this was a remarkably mild Winter. I think I have felt it colder in England.

Adieu my Dear D[r]. Make my Duty agreable to My Father & Mother & be assured I ever am

Your sincere Friend

PERCY.

VI. CAMP ON MOUNT WHOREDOM, Aug[t]. 12. 1775

A strange Place Dear D[r]. to write from to a Clergyman — Yet so it is, My Tent is upon the highest Summit of it. Know then that there is a ridge of Hills so called running from the Harbour towards the Center of the Town, on which my Brigade is encamped. Was I not certain that you would attribute my silence to the true Cause, want of time, I should fill this Paper with Apologies for my not answering your Letters more regularly. But I will say no more on that Subject, & only thank you in this One for about twenty, which I have received from you. Nothing can make me happier than the News I have from all hands of my Mother's Recovery. I must confess I was very much alarmed at the different Accounts I have lately had of Her bad State of Health. I have wrote to my

Brother by this opportunity to congratulate Him on His Wedding. My Father writes me word She is well spoken of. I hope they will be happy. I must own I could have wished for your Sake that there had been a little more of the *Decus et Tutamen Avorum*. However the Pedigree is in good hands when it is in yours.

A curious Event has taken place here yesterday. Our Admiral has been boxing in the Street with one of the Commissioners of the Customs. I have not heard the true History of the Affair, but from what I can gather I believe the Admiral has had the worst of it in every respect. Pray make my *bacio los manos* to Reveley & Madame on the Birth of their Daughter. I hope they got my Letter soon enough.

If you should see M^r^. Charleton, or anybody from North^d^. House should have occasion to write to Him pray let him know that his Son is doing very well & assure Him that a Toe more or less is of no consequence whatever. As for poor Gair he is very ill. So ill that I assure you I am a good [?] alarmed about Him. I should be particularly sorry to lose Him, for He is not only a perfectly well bred Gentleman, but holds a very high Rank in his Profession, & is in great esteem amongst all the Medical Persons here.

Adieu My Dear D^r^. make my best Comp^ts^. acceptable to all your Family & be assured I am

Your sincere Friend

PERCY.

To

The Rev^d^. & D^r^. Percy.

VII. BOSTON Jan^ry^ 7^th^. 1776.

DEAR D^R^.

You will easily see how very irregularly the Letters from Europe arrive, when I inform you, that I did not receive your Letter of the 2^d^. of Septr. till yesterday. Having settled this Point, allow me to wish you & your Family the Compliments of the Season, which I hope to do in Person next year, for I take it for granted the next Campaign will be so active & I hope so decisive a One that the Rebels will be glad to sue for Mercy. All however will depend on Our having a

Sufficient Force sent Us out very early in the Spring. As Gen^{l}. Clinton is just going to set out on a detached Command, I shall be the only Maj^{r}. Gen^{l}. left under M^{r}. Howe, so that I shall have business enough. If the Patriots were here, they would abuse Us, & say the Scotch influenced the Cabinet here as well as at home, for Brig^{r}. Gen^{l}. Grant directs Our Commander in Chief & all his Operations. M^{r}. Howe is I believe the only Man in his Army who does not perceive it. I know the Brig^{r}. well, & am certain that his Abilities are not equal to what he has undertaken that is the being Director General to the Commander in Chief of such an Army as Ours. I wish from my Soul that we may not feel the Consequences. I have not the least Guess by what Conveyance this Letter is to go, but it shall be by the very first. Our new Admiral is arrived, & like all other new Brooms seems to promise to sweep clean. We wanted a more Active man than the last, for really the Service suffered material during his Command. M^{r}. Shuldam is a Man well spoken of in his Profession, & therefore I hope we shall go on well. We have had the most violent Gales of Wind for some time past that ever was known, so that we suppose great numbers of the Ships destined for this Port, are gone to the West Indies. Adieu Dear D^{r}. make my Comp^{ts}. to all your Family & believe me to be

Yours sincerely

PERCY.

D^{r}. Percy

To

The Reverend

D^{r}. Percy.

VIII. HALIFAX, June 1st. 1776

DEAR D^{R}.

Allow me to return you many thanks for the Letters I have had the Pleasure of receiving lately from You. I cannot express how much I feel myself obliged to you for all the News you are so good as to give me. The History of the Ladies Head-dress is really entertaining. I did not think my Fair Countrywomen would have made themselves so ridiculous.

I hope the Cabbages Potatoes &c. will be displaced, & that some Heroic Damsel will instead of them grace Her Head with a representation of the Actions at Lexington or Bunkers Hill, or the Flight of the Rebels from before Quebeck. The Niger Man of War brought us yesterday the last agreable Piece of News. And so precipitate was their Retreat that whole Companies flung away even their Arms. Nay they left their Pots boiling, so that the King's Troops set down & eat their dinners for them. As I take for granted you will have the Particulers of this Affair from Canada long before the Arrival of this Letter, I shall not trouble you with a Detail of them. I hope I shall soon be able to send you some good News from our Quarter. We are to sail on Wednesday or Thursday next, & I think in about a fortnight after that, something must pop between us & the Rebels.

Adieu Dear Dr. make my best Compts. acceptable to Mrs. Percy & your Family & believe me to be

Your sincere Friend

PERCY.

P: S: Since writing the above Capt. Mowatt is just arrived & has brought me two Letters more from you, for which I return you many thanks.

To

The Revd. Dr. Percy.

IX. [A copy.]

No. 20th. NEW TOWN LONG ISLAND

Septr. 1st. 1776

Allow me my dearest Father to congratulate You on a Victory the King's Troops obtain'd over the Rebels at Bedford near Brookland on the 27th of last Month; which both in its immediate & consequential Effects, is likely to be of the greatest Advantage to Great Britain. On the 26th at Night We marched from Utrecht on this Island, where we had landed without Opposition, & passing thro' Fletlands made for a Gorge in the Mountains which We flattered ourselves was not Guarded, in order to gain the left Flank of the Enemy. This Plan succeeded even beyond our Expectations, for we were on the Flank, & in their

Rear, before they knew what we were about. The Engagement did not begin till the advanced Guard under Gen[l]. Clinton & Lord Cornwallis had arrived at Bedford, & before I could get up with the Army the Affair was over. I had however an Opportunity of sending the light Infantry of the Guards to attack a Party of the Rebels, but they ran away directly & only allow'd the Guards just Time to give them one Fire, our loss on this Occasion is scarce to be mentioned. We had only five Officers & fifty seven Men killed, & about 20 Officers wounded. In short our whole Loss in killed, wounded, & missing, does not exceed 300 Men, Whereas on the Rebel side by the very best Acc[ts]. from themselves they have lost upwards of 3000 Men. We have taken three Gen[ls]. besides a surprizing Number of Field & other Officers & 1500 Private Men Prisoners. This was intirely owing to our Men attacking them the proper Way. The moment the Rebels fired our Men rushed on them with their Bayonets & never gave them Time to load again — Our Men behaved themselves like British Troops fighting in a good Cause. I cannot Omit mentioning the Guards at whose Head I had the Honor to be — that Day. The Spirit & Alertness of both Officers & Men deserve the highest Encomiums. Their readiness & willingness to do whatever they were desired, has gained them the Esteem & Approbation of the whole Army. In short they are not only the finest Body of Men that ever was seen, but it seems to be the Study of every Officer & Man amongst them to be as distinguishable for Discipline, Spirit, & Conduct, Nothing is a Hardship, nothing is a difficulty with Them. Whatever they are directed to do, they do with Chearfullness & Pleasure. I am happy to be able to do them this Justice which they richly deserve & I am sure his Majesty must be pleased to hear that His Guards have proved themselves worthy of the Honor they enjoy of being near His Person when at Home, by their very proper & spirited Conduct when in the Field. On the 30[th]. about 3 in the Morn[g]. the Rebels evacuated or rather fled from all their strong works at Brookland & passed over to New York, leaving behind them, Cannon, Stores, Horses, Provisions & even most of their Tents. And giving us up by this means quiet Possession of Long Island. In consequence of which We marched on Yesterday to this Place, where almost every body has come in to Us, such as have been in

Arms or Active have surrendered Themselves, & all taken the Oaths, Whole Regts. we are informed have deserted from them at New York, & in short they are in the greatest State of Confusion. They feel severely the Blow on the 27th. & I think I may venture to assert, that they will never again stand before us in the Field. Every Thing seems to be over with Them, & I flatter myself now that this Campaign will put a total End to the War. I own it will on many Accts. give me great Satisfaction if that should be the Case but on none more, than because it will afford me an Opportunity soon of convincing You in Person with what sincerity I am

Your most dutifull

& most Affectionate Son

PERCY.

Majr. Cuyler one of Genl. Howe's Aid de Camps will be good enough to present this to you. If you should see Ld. or Lt. Aylesford I beg you will be so good as to tell them, that Mr. Finch is going on remarkably well & is perfectly safe & unhurt.

X. NEWCASTLE July 11th. 1778.

DEAR Dr.

You must excuse my not writing to you sooner for I really have scarce one half hour in the twenty four to myself. I beg leave to return you now many thanks for your two Letters of the 25th. of last Month & the 6th. of this; As well as for the Interest you take in whatever concerns me. I find my Friend of the Morning Post, is remarkably good to me; for he no sooner announces my having got rid of One Wife, but he is so obliging as to assure the Publick that I am looking out for another, who tho not of a very distinguished Family, is nevertheless very beautiful & with a large Fortune. This last Ingredient thank God I dont want, & I am not quite sure whether I have not almost had enough of a very distinguished Family. However with Good Mr. Bates's Leave, I shall take a little more time on this Business, than he thinks proper to allow me. The Old Proverb of "the

burnt Child dreads the Fire," is a very just One, & I fancy I shall be pretty cautious how I engage again. I am very well & happy in my present Situation, & unless I can find a second Lady Algernon I dont think I shall be easily tempted. I hope we shall soon have the Pleasure to see you in the North, at least en passant which [is] almost all I must expect. I beg my best respects to M^rs^. Percy & the rest of your Family & am

Yours Most sincerely

PERCY.

XI.

Sir John Fielding presents his Respects to his Grace the Duke of Northumberland, and begs Leave to inform him, that this day the Picture of the Earl Percy was placed in Guild Hall and received there by the Gentlemen whose Names are herewith inclosed with as much Honour and Respect as his own Heart could wish or Earl Percy deserve; that his Grace the Duke of Newcastle being informed of this Circumstance sent us most politely a fine Buck on the Occasion. The Rev^d^. M^r^. Bennett our Chaplain made & spoke so ingenious an Oration on the Occasion that it was the unanimous Sense of the Gentlemen present that a Copy of the same be transmitted to you, and if your Grace did not disapprove of it that it should be published, have therefore sent a faithful Copy of the Same for your Grace's Perusal whose Directions in this as in other Matters regarding the Honour of your family and the public Welfare shall be punctually obeyed by

My Lord
Your respectful
and
Your Grace's
Affectionate friend

FIELDING.

Bow Street
July 30. 1776

To
His Grace The Duke of Northumberland
From S^r^ Jn. Fielding.